

# **Downtown Providence District Management Authority**

## **Board Meeting**

**October 20, 2005**

### **1. Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 8:40 a.m. Directors present included Evan Granoff, Richard Lappin and Maria Ruggieri. Present on behalf of Director Joseph Paolino, Sr. was Nathanael Hannah. Directors Arnold B. Chace, Jr., Judy Cullen, Robert Gagliardi, Christopher Placco, and Stanley Weiss were absent. Ex-officio Members present included Michael Corso, Joseph DiBattista, and Fred Vincent on behalf of Joseph Paolino, Jr.

Providence Foundation staff present included Daniel Baudouin, Executive Director and Joelle Crane, Program Manager. Also present were Urban Place Consulting employees Steve Gibson, Consultant; Frank LaTorre, Director of Public Space; Leslie Schwartz, Office Manager. Block-by-Block staff present included Frank Zammarelli, Operations Manager.

Also present were Richard Davis, Executive Director of the Pawtucket Foundation and Francisco Ramirez, Deputy Chief of Operations for the City of Providence.

**There was a brief discussion about voting members sending designees to represent them at Board meetings and a question as to whether designees count towards a quorum. The DPDMA by-laws were consulted, and the topic was not addressed in the document. The group agreed to move forward with today's meeting, allowing designees to both count toward quorum and vote. Frank LaTorre will address this issue by the next Board meeting.**

## **2. Approval of Minutes of the September 8, 2005 meeting**

**A motion was made by Director Evan Granoff to approve the minutes of the September 8th Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Director Lappin, and a roll call vote was taken as follows:**

**Director Granoff    Yes**

**Director Lappin    Yes**

**Director Ruggieri    Yes**

**Nathan Hannah for Joseph Paolino, Sr. Yes**

**Michael Corso for Arnold B. Chace, Jr. Yes**

**Therefore, the motion passed.**

## **3. Financial Report**

**Steve Gibson and Leslie Schwartz of Urban Place Consulting summarized the work that has been done to raise our assessment collection rate to 98%. The work has consisted primarily of verifying site addresses, updating mailing addresses for owners, establishing contacts in residential and professional condominium buildings, and hand-delivering invoices to those who stated they had not previously**

received them. A list of owners with past-due assessments was circulated.

Director Ruggieri suggested offering credit card payments as an option for property owners' quarterly assessments. Discussion about transaction fees and other related expenses followed. It was agreed that this possibility will be explored by DID staff.

Steve Gibson summarized the balance sheet and the profit and loss report for the month of September. He stated that our goal is to keep our spending approximately \$80,000 under the projected budget in order to maintain cash flow throughout the year. Mr. Gibson also explained the details of the special projects budget, including how funds have been spent to date, as well as funds allocated, but not yet spent. Mr. Gibson stated that Leslie will be doing the data entry work to change the book-keeping system over to 100% accrual basis between now and the next DPDMA Board meeting.

Mr. Gibson summarized the meeting with the City Tax Collector, Robert Ceprano and his staff, which took place on October 19th and was attended by Mr. Gibson, Dan Baudouin, Frank LaTorre, and Leslie Schwartz. Mr. Ceprano agreed to flag DID parcels on the City Tax Collector's computer system. This will prompt City staff to refer potential buyers and sellers to the DID office for assessment payment information.

**The following language will also be added to Providence's Municipal Lien Certificate: "This property may be subject to assessment by the Downtown Providence District Management Authority (AKA Downtown Improvement District). Please call 401-421-4450 for payment information."**

**A letter to the Rhode Island Bar Association and Title Attorneys is being written by Frank LaTorre and Dan Baudouin to further increase awareness of the DID and the required assessments.**

**Leslie Schwartz presented the draft DPDMA Collections Procedure to the Board. This draft was developed after reviewing the City's tax collection procedure, a copy of which is included in the meeting packet. Michael Corso suggested adding the following verbage to the first two steps in order to make the letters consistent with what appears on the quarterly invoices: "If the first, or any subsequent, installment of this bill is not paid on the due date, the whole assessment or any balance thereof shall immediately become due and payable with interest at the rate of 12% per annum from July 1, 2005."**

**A motion was made by Director Richard Lappin to accept the draft collections procedure with the changes suggested by Mr. Corso. The motion was seconded by Director Granoff, and a roll call vote was taken as follows:**

**Director Granoff Yes**

**Director Lappin Yes**

**Director Ruggieri Yes**

**Nathan Hannah for Joseph Paolino, Sr. Yes**

**Michael Corso for Arnold B. Chace, Jr. Yes**

**Therefore, the motion passed.**

#### **4. Marketing Report**

**Joelle Crane of Providence Foundation presented the marketing report. Much effort this month was spent updating and re-designing the downtown walking maps. This printing was double the first one, as previous supply was not able to keep up with demand. Block-By-Block Staff are distributing the maps to local businesses and points of distribution. The walking map on the website has been updated, as well. An updated map was included in each meeting packet.**

**Several articles are underway for the next newsletter, including a Clean Team graffiti removal update and special feature on Richard Lappin. The fall newsletter is scheduled to be printed and distributed in November.**

**The window signage project is in progress. Handouts showing the proposed layouts for the banners that will hang in store windows were distributed and feedback was requested. It was suggested that the phone number be larger and more prominent on the banner. The**

**marketing committee will review the proposed designs and locations and will move forward with bidding for production, installation, and maintenance of the signs.**

## **5. Operations Committee Report**

**Frank LaTorre summarized the items discussed at the last Operations Committee meeting. On October 20th, several of the Board members and staff met with the Mayor, who acknowledged the importance of working together to solve issues related to Downtown. In response, the Mayor has formed 3 committees to address trash removal, snow removal, and parks issues. Downtown sidewalks and lighting were also discussed.**

**There is a new committee formed regarding activities at Kennedy Plaza that is chaired by Providence Chief of Police Dean Esserman and Garry Bliss, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs for the City of Providence. Frank LaTorre is optimistic that this group will be impactful, as “all of the players are there: transportation, police and school officials, as well as social services, and they have immediate and long-range actions and goals identified.”**

**The next Operations Committee meeting is scheduled for October 27 at 4 p.m.**

## **6. Report from Urban Place Consulting & Director of Public Space: on-going projects.**

**Frank LaTorre reported on the projects he has underway at this time, including, but not limited to: Providing leadership, direction and oversight to Block-By-Block**

**Late night environmental issues**

**New Trash Receptacles**

**Sidewalk Snow Removal**

**Kennedy Plaza**

**Sidewalk Repair and New Traffic Circulation Systems**

**Community Bulletin Board Kiosks**

**Comprehensive Plan for Trees in the District**

**Each project was summarized in writing within the meeting packet.**

## **7. Report from Block-By-Block**

**Frank Zammarelli distributed a written summary of statistics for the month of September 2005. All painting of street fixtures is completed except for federal mail boxes, fire hydrants, and Narragansett Electric aluminum poles, none of which BBB staff will be doing.**

**The Clean Team members completed 2 days of training with OSHA staff regarding hazardous materials this month.**

**Pressure-washing the sidewalks is going slower than anticipated, primarily because of the volume of gum stuck to the surface and the**

**time it takes to remove it.**

**Mr. Zammarelli is exploring the options for safe chemicals to effectively clean street sign poles.**

**Safety Team members assisted law enforcement by detaining a hit-and-run driver and tracking and detaining an auto larceny perpetrator this month.**

**A request was made that Mr. Zammarelli keep Clean Team and Safe Team statistics separately, and he said that that's possible.**

**The equipment for the Block-By-Block staff is now located in the convention center parking deck. A fence was built around it, so it is secure and out of the way. This arrangement is working out well for staff.**

**8. Discussion of DID office location from calendar year 2006 forward**  
**Director Evan Granoff stated that Joe DiBattista and his partners have been extraordinarily generous to give the DID office space, furniture, and a phone system free of charge for the past year. As of January 1, 2006, the DID needs to start paying rent. In order to give everyone a fair chance to make an offer, Director Granoff is directing the DID staff to put out a Request For Proposals to all property owners within the DID and brokers. This will be done and the proposals compiled by the next DPDMA Board meeting on November 17, 2005.**



## **9. Other Business**

**None.**

## **10. Adjournment**

**A motion was made by Director Ruggieri to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Director Lappin, and a roll call vote was taken as follows:**

**Director Granoff    Yes**

**Director Lappin    Yes**

**Director Ruggieri    Yes**

**Nathan Hannah for Joseph Paolino, Sr. Yes**

**Michael Corso for Arnold B. Chace, Jr. Yes**

**Therefore, the motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Leslie Huikko**

**DID Office Manager**